

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

17 August 2000

Projects Reviewed

Jackson Park Detention Pond
Carkeek Park Detention Pond
Parks NMF/ CRF
Green Streets
Southwest Precinct
Civic Center/ Open Space

Convened: 8:30am

Adjourned: 5:30pm

Commissioners Present

Rick Sundberg
Moe Batra
Ralph Cipriani
Gail Dubrow
Jack Mackie
Cary Moon

Staff Present

John Rahaim
Layne Cubell
Brad Gassman
Sally MacGregor

17 August 00 Project: **Jackson Park Detention Pond**

Phase: Schematics

Presenter: Gavin Patterson, Seattle Public Utilities (SPU)

Attendees: Gordon Clowers, Strategic Planning Office (SPO)

Time: .5 hour (SDC Ref. # 169 | DC00178)

Action: The Commission appreciates the presentation and makes the following comments and recommendations.

- **The Design Commission would like Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) to further investigate the sites context, and specifically how area contaminants impact the water quality and aesthetic quality of the ponds;**
- **encourages the proponent to explore coordination with Seattle Transportation (SEATLAN) to investigate design options that minimize the effect of pollutants from the runoff of I-5;**
- **would like the proponent to consider the removal of fish passage barriers both on site and downstream on Thornton Creek;**
- **encourages the proponent to incorporate plants within the pond system's vegetative buffer that will be conducive to improving water quality and also animal habitat;**
- **would like the proponent to encourage the City's golf course design consultants to understand and appreciate the aesthetic qualities and educational opportunities of the detention process with the intention to make the process visible; and**
- **looks forward to seeing how this project develops with respect to these comments in future stages of development.**

A representative from Seattle Public Utilities presented the schematic design for the Jackson Park Detention Pond, which will be located at the Jackson Park Golf Course on the east side of I-5, south of 145th Street. Seattle Public Utilities is working on this project with the Department of Parks and Recreation (DOPAR) and the Jackson Park Golf Course architect, to comply with the golf course Master Plan. This detention pond will serve Thornton Creek, a typical urban creek, whose hydrology is characterized by a rapid increase in flows during storms, followed by low flows during dry periods. To prevent damaging flooding downstream, this continuous system will divert water into the three off-channel detention ponds, and release the water more slowly to reduce the erosion downstream. These ponds will be linked through pipes underground, and the design will allow for seasonal adjustments. Additionally, the outdated irrigation system will be replaced. Because this is a Chinook salmon and wildlife habitat, different creek features will be added, including logs and rocks. To mitigate the interference with the golf course and its activities, the construction will begin at the south end of the site, and move north. Through the long-term Master Plan for the golf course, the golf course will become slightly longer than its current configuration. The construction will take place between 2002-2003.

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Would like to know how the system works, and why the overflow will run underground, rather than above ground where it would be more visible.
 - Proponent explained that through this system, as the water level rises, the north pond would fill first, followed by the middle pond, and then the south pond. Further explained that the water overflow will travel through pipes underground to accommodate golf course play. The landscape architect consultant will be designing the terraced perimeters of the ponds, and will incorporate plants that survive fluctuating water levels.
- Would like to know if there is a possibility that some ponds might be dry, while the others are full.
 - Proponent stated that through this design, all ponds would have water. Further stated that the ponds might require aerators, to prevent algae from forming. Additionally, there will be a debris rack to prevent floating debris from flowing downstream.
- Would like to know if the long-term plan includes the removal of the concrete culvert system currently located downstream.
 - Proponent stated that SPU would like to remove fish barriers and habitat along Thornton Creek through the long-term plan.
- Would like to know if the golf course Master Plan recognizes the anticipated influx of animals that will come to explore this habitat.
 - Proponent stated that although there have been some concerns about geese and the water quality problems resulting from their presence, SPU has not explored this subject. Agrees that this is an issue that should be considered.
- Would like to know if the design will diminish the effects of turf management and fertilizer of the golf course.
 - Proponent stated that there would be natural, vegetative buffers around the ponds, in addition to water quality monitoring. Further stated that the runoff from I-5 is also a significant pollutant.
- Would like to know how strongly the design takes the golf course's use of fertilizer into account.
 - Proponent stated that this consideration has not deeply influenced the design because the problem will not be more significant than its current state. Presently, the golf course extends to the creek, while through this design, the vegetative buffer will be fifty to one hundred feet.
- Suggests that the proponent consider particular plant materials that have superior filtration properties for conditions in which there is less than fifty feet of vegetative buffer.
- Based on the projected significance of the water runoff from I-5, would like to know if there is a possibility to incorporate bio-remediation in the plan.
 - Proponent agreed that a large area of the highway would be producing runoff, but also feels it is imperative to consider the objectives that can be included in the scope of the project. Further stated that there can be assumptions about the degree of the problem, but test and data would be required to precede the design.
- Understanding that the scope of the project is water detention, feels that the design could be shaped to address a hierarchy of goals because the magnitude of this project already creates a condition favorable for further intervention.
 - Proponent stated that isolated issues are examined on a project level, but agreed that it is also important to take other surrounding impacts into consideration.

- Feels that there is an opportunity for collaboration with the Department of Transportation to investigate this issue through the development of this project.
- Recognizes that flood control accounts for this design, and other potential goals would require other designs, but would like the proponent to take a second pass to produce a slightly modified design, not outside the scope of the project.
- Feels that this type of project becomes more interesting and is even aesthetically pleasing through an understanding of flood control and its process. Would like the proponent to integrate a functioning golf course with a visibly operable flood control system.

17 August 00 Project: **Carkeek Park Detention Pond**

Phase: Conceptual

Presenter: Gavin Patterson

Time: .5 hour (SDC Ref. # 169 | DC00179)

Actions: The Commission appreciates the thorough presentation and makes the following comments and recommendations.

- **The Commission supports the efforts to minimize the increasing velocity of the Piper Creek tributary, urging Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) to examine the overall, far-reaching impacts of the water detention system;**
- **urges Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) to explore creative uses for the house on the site that might relate to educational programs already at the park;**
- **realizing that water detention to be the primary goal, would also like the water flow and process of detention legible and visible to the public; and**
- **urges SPU to explore pedestrian trail improvements that provide better access for the community and consider a link to SPU's SEA Streets project in the local neighborhood.**

The Carkeek Park Detention Pond, located adjacent to the eastern boundary of the park, will serve Piper Creek. This creek drains approximately 1,800 acres of northwest Seattle and discharges to Puget Sound through the four hundred acre Carkeek Park. This detention pond will reduce the volume of damaging flows, which causes erosion and impedes the survival of juvenile salmonids. Currently, the City of Seattle is planning a new project to construct sidewalks along Greenwood Avenue North, part of which falls within the drainage area of this tributary; these new impervious surfaces will require storm water retention.

The City has acquired the private property, which is steeply sloped, and includes a shallow pond on the tributary within the property created by a dam built by the previous owner and resident. To the south of the pond is a house. Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) has investigated systems alternative to a pond, but has chosen to expand the existing pond. Additionally, SPU is considering subdividing this property in order not reduce the housing stock of the city. SPU would also like to extend the existing trail through the property to provide a pedestrian link between the surrounding community and Carkeek Park.

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Would like to know if there are environmental and technological design alternatives to the impervious sidewalk along Greenwood Avenue. Feels that the neighborhood should be presented with the impact and consequences of sidewalks.
 - Proponent stated that the residents of the neighborhood reviewed the options, and prefer a sidewalk. Further stated that this is not included in the scope of SPU's design.
- Would like to know the different possibilities under consideration for the future of the existing structure on the property. Thinks that the structure should be transferred to the Department of Parks and Recreation (DOPAR) to be used as an educational center in conjunction with Carkeek Park.
 - Proponent stated that there is an interpretive center nearby, at the entrance to Carkeek Park. Further stated that SPU is hoping to work in collaboration with DOPAR to create a "seamless" site. SPU is considering subdividing the site, but is not yet aware of the zoning of the site.

- Is concerned that DOPAR considers structures, obtained through open space acquisition, a maintenance problem, rather than an asset, as seen through the observation of various examples. Believes that SPU should encourage DOPAR to pursue many potential creative uses for the structure. Feels that the use of this building, as an artist in residence studio for example, increases the opportunity for stewardship.
 - Proponent stated that, ideally, SPU does not want to remove the structure, and feels that these suggestions are reasonable possibilities.
- Feels that, in the event the structure is not used, the building should be moved, rather than torn down. Additionally, the building materials could be reused by Habitat for Humanity, for example, rather than thrown away in a landfill.
- Would like to know if there will be a fence around the pond.
 - Proponent stated that, for aesthetic purposes, SPU prefers to keep the site open. Further stated that SPU would assume limited liability.
- Would like to know the design strategy for the existing waterfall; suggests that this feature should be visible for those driving by the site to provide a visual link between the creek and the pond below.
 - Proponent stated that no plans have been made yet. Further stated that the road crossing this site is narrow and winding; SPU does not intend to distract drivers. Currently, there is not an opportunity for views of the waterfall, but intends, if DOPAR allows, to create a trail to adjoin the existing trail. Believes there will also need to be a street crossing.
- Recognizes that detention is the main design priority, but would like the design team to address the entire site and water flow, from beginning to end. Feels that the water flow, at each grade change, should be treated in the same manner, and this process should be publicly visible.
 - Proponent is not certain this option would be technically possible. Agrees that the intervention should be aesthetically pleasing, but believes that the existing dam would require re-design to prevent its destruction. The water level fluctuates greatly, and it is necessary that the water continue to flow at a level of five feet. Further stated that if the pipes were removed, a waterfall edge might not be sufficient. However, proponent stated that SPU would forward these suggestions to the design team.
- Suggested that SPU examine some examples of detention ponds in Kent, in which the process of retaining water and then releasing it is visible.
- Realizing the initiative to minimize the velocity of the water and reduce the effect of erosion, would like to know if SPU has a long term plan to lessen the damage throughout the broader scope of the watershed.
 - Proponent stated that the project will have a long term impact, but the process is slow and incremental.

17 August 00 Project: **Parks NMF/ CRF**

Phase: Briefing

Previous Review: 05 August 1999 (Update), 03 February 2000 (Update)

Presenters: Karen Galt, Department of Parks and Recreation (DOPAR)
 Pamela Kliment, Department of Parks and Recreation (DOPAR)

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 220 | DC00042)

Action: The Commission appreciates the engaging briefing and looks forward to further updates.

- **The Commission would like to hear about the Department of Parks and Recreation (DOPAR) approach to historical structures such as the Greenwood greenhouses and how this informs Neighborhood Matching Funds (NMF) projects; and**
- **would like DOPAR to encourage communities to pursue more creative solutions to playground designs and not be limited to copying what is already built.**

Representatives from the Department of Parks and Recreation (DOPAR), Pam Kliment and Karen Galt, presented a status briefing of Neighborhood Matching Funds Projects in Parks. Working in collaboration with many different departments, there are a variety of types of projects in various stages.

Blakeley Property- Located near the Burke-Gilman Trail and University Village, this will be a small construction on Seattle Transportation (SEATRAIN) property to provide additional access points to the trail.

Pilot Skateboard Park-As a response to local community interest in skateboard parks for younger children, this project proposal does not yet have a specific site. A landscape architect has offered services to support the application process, and the proposal includes individual skating surfaces, rather than permanent, poured concrete.

Carkeek Park Environmental Education Building- The Advisory Council has hired an architect to start pre-design in preparation for September application. The project will include renovation and repair of an existing building. Through these renovations, other sustainable goals will be pursued, including rainwater collection.

Greenwood Park- The community is leading the first phase of development, which includes a play area and associated elements. This project includes an area of 2.2 acres, and there are greenhouses on the site, which will be demolished.

North Seattle Park Improvements- This completed design comprises of minor vegetation improvements in the disc golf areas. There is an existing house that will be relocated. At the eastern edge of the park, there will be a pedestrian connection between 105th and 107th, which may become an “art walk” with sculptural earthwork as a setting for future sculptures.

Wallingford Playfield- The design includes tennis courts, a play area, a wading pool, and a picnic area. The community is concerned about the size of the soccer field, which has been reoriented to provide more space to the play area.

4th and Ward- This site, on lower Queen Anne contains an existing building that will be reused. The community would like to retain the building as a gathering space, although it is not in good condition. The simple plan also includes play equipment and benches located on a path.

Rogers Playground- This project includes a small play area for children, and DOPAR presented a schematic design for the Northeast corner of the site, at Lake Union.

Cormorant Cove- This continuing project includes seawall reconstruction, planting, a pathway, and art elements for a community park in West Seattle.

Lincoln Park Annex- The site concept for this West Seattle park is complete. The project includes a wooded bank, trail improvements, enhanced views from an overlook, a tennis court, ADA access to the south, and a proposed P-Patch.

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Feels that the greenhouses in Greenwood Park contribute to the character of the park, are in fairly good shape, and should not be removed. Feels that DOPAR should be responsible for the stewardship of these structures. Does not believe that there is enough internal commitment within DOPAR to preserve the totality of the historic character of open spaces within the city. Believes that there are creative, adaptive re-use options for the greenhouses and other similar historical structures in parks.
 - Proponent stated that DOPAR would investigate that decision, but in the past, the greenhouses have attracted vandals. Further stated that this issue has been presented to the Landmarks Committee, and there was not strong support to retain the structures.
- Regarding the Rogers Playground, feels that DOPAR should encourage the community to think creatively about the playground design. Believes that the playground design is static, and children should be given an opportunity to use their imagination.
 - Proponent agreed that this is a good idea, and some playground manufacturers offer a variety of different pieces of equipment. Further stated that the community rejected use of a large, old propeller.
- Would like to know if DOPAR encourages members of the community to visit other playgrounds for ideas.
 - Proponent stated yes, and that residents must make this effort early in the design process.
- Would like to know if there could be an opportunity for communities to adopt parks, similar to the P-Patch program, in order to assume maintenance responsibility.
 - Proponent stated that communities can adopt parks and organize maintenance programs. The success of these types of activities depends on the organization of the group, and whether this stewardship would continue if the members of the community changed. Proponent expressed concern that DOPAR would be obliged to assume responsibility if these community efforts ceased.

17 August 00

Commission Business

ACTION ITEMS

- A. TIMESHEETS- Completed and turned in.
- B. MINUTES FROM 03 AUGUST 2000- Approved with revisions.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- C. THEATER ADVISORY GROUP MEETING

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- D. DC CANDIDATE UPDATE- MEETING WITH MAYOR/ RAHAIM- John Rahaim presented an update on new Commissioner candidates and the continuing selection process.
- E. MID-SEPTEMBER FAREWELL- The Commission made suggestions for a time and location for a farewell event for retiring Commissioners.

17 August 00 Project: **Green Streets**

Phase: Briefing

Presenters: Lyle Bicknell, CityDesign
 Dennis Meier, Strategic Planning Office (SPO)
 Ed Switaj, Seattle Transportation (SEATRAN)

Attendees: Peter Aylsworth, CityDesign
 Barbara Gray, Strategic Planning Office (SPO)
 Joel Prather, Seattle Transportation (SEATRAN)
 Robert Scully, CityDesign

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 220 | DC00048)

Action: The Commission appreciates the briefing and looks forward to future updates taking the following in consideration:

- **clarify the definition of “Green Streets;”**
- **set performance goals for demonstration projects; and**
- **develop a brochure to better communicate the concept of “Green Streets” to the general public.**

Representatives from CityDesign, Seattle Transportation, and the Strategic Planning Office presented a briefing of the Green Streets program, including an overview of the overall program, a concept summary, and the process by which Green Streets are developed. The initial purpose of a Green Street designation was to provide for the special open space needs of high-density neighborhoods by using portions of existing, under-utilized or undeveloped street rights of way. To develop a viable program, City staff has consolidated efforts to focus on feasible options for the current, eighteen identified Green Streets; these streets are typically pedestrian-oriented streets. The team has developed an inventory of the existing conditions for a status report. This initial direction, through an establishment of design guidelines, is important; future abutting development at these locations must abide by these rules. These guidelines are generic, but become specific in regards to distinct streets. Examining the context, a consultant has creatively developed some ideas that will create the desired environment. Zoning guidelines have also affected the design and uses of these Green Streets.

With record development within Seattle, there is a considerable need for open space downtown. However, implementation of improvement of the public right of way becomes difficult through consideration of the many factors involved, such as conflicting concerns of interested parties and technical complexities. The current owners of the existing adjacent developments do not consider the possibility that future uses of the property might change, thus changing the character and need of open space.

Many streets have been chosen to be a Green Street, and a half dozen are moving through stages of implementation. Many of the streets feature sidewalk widening, landscape improvements, special materials and furnishings, and/ or unique or no parking. Some new developments along Green Streets have provided bonus open Green Street space in exchange for private open space requirement. Some private developers, as seen through an example on Cedar, have pooled resources to participate in the program as a private initiative to develop the street with continuity and consistency in treatment.

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Would like to know why the Green Street program has focused primarily on downtown streets.
 - Proponents stated that there is a considerable lack of open space downtown. The 1985 Downtown Plan designated the need for “street parks.” Through the demonstration process, the team is working to resolve the intent of the Green Streets program, and

determine whether the community wants open space, pedestrian improvements, street trees, or actual Green Streets. Further stated that throughout Seattle communities, neighborhood planning groups are authorized to identify Green Streets.

- Realizing that the principles might fall between policy and design criteria, would like the proponents to explain the performance objectives of the Green Streets program.
 - Proponents stated that the team is trying to develop a menu of flexible and general possibilities for Green Streets through the demonstration projects. Cited the Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) “SEA Streets” as an example of low cost street improvements through increased landscaping and a delineated pedestrian lane, rather than formal curbs. The proponents would like to expand on the existing technical typology in the Director’s Rule, and promote the type of desired environment of downtown Green Streets, based on the context and its activity level. Further stated that street use is an important external factor to determine design guideline principles that will help the new development relate to the Green Streets on which they are located.
- Realizing that the goal of Green Streets arises from ideas of what creates a pedestrian-friendly, aesthetically pleasing environment, would like to know if any other issues have surfaced, such as a desire for an environmentally-friendly urban habitat.
 - Proponent stated the primary goal is not solely to create pedestrian friendly streetscapes. Proponents would like to utilize unused street right of way to create open space where it is needed. This can be achieved through narrowing lanes to create space for open space functions, such as gathering spaces or cafes, depending on the present zoning. Further stated that the physical improvements would be the same physical changes made for pedestrian purposes, but the purpose would not be the same. The program is general, but the function of the street provides the range of possibilities.
- Recognizes that the broad definition of Green Streets accommodates a number of objects. Would encourage the City to restate the policy with specific, mapped information to apply for federal funding through the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Feels that this is an opportunity to restate this project with environmental justice concerns to compete for funding.
- Would like to know why there is not continuity in the layout of streets chosen to participate in the Green Street program.
 - Proponents stated that the implementation relies upon neighborhood planning.
- Would like to know if the vocabulary could be broadened to include other initiatives such as environmental concerns, community kiosks. Feels that the current palette is too narrow.
- Believes that the proponents should produce a brochure that promotes the concept with good examples.
 - Proponents agreed with this idea and stated that there have been efforts to explain the current efforts and different opportunities.
- Feels that there have been missed opportunities to demonstrate these projects. Feels that neighborhoods should combine efforts to expand this myopic vision and realize the breadth of opportunities. Thinks that the guidelines or the possible brochure should be prescriptive but also outline the mechanisms to achieve the intended Green Streets objectives.
- Feels that neighborhood plans should be compatible with universal, City planning efforts to acknowledge the large scope of the Green Streets program. Would like to remove the barrier of conflicting neighborhood plans by suggesting incentives of city investments.

17 August 00 Project: **Southwest Precinct**

Phase: Design Development

Previous Reviews: 16 September 1999 (Briefing), 2 December 1999 (Conceptual), 6 April 2000 (Schematic)

Presenter: Steve Arai, Arai Jackson, Architects and Planners
 Fred L Beck, Hough Beck and Baird
 Kay Kirkpatrick, Project Artist
 Rich Murakami, Arai Jackson, Architects and Planners

Attendees: Lyle Bicknell, CityDesign
 Tony Gale, Executive Services Department (ESD)
 Teresa Rodriguez, Executive Services Department (ESD)
 Ruri Yampolsky, Seattle Arts Commission (SAC)

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 169 | DC00117)

Action: The Commission appreciates the presentation and makes the following comments and recommendations.

- **The Commission supports the project's grounding in the neighborhood plan and the sustainable goals of the project;**
- **would like to examine the landscape details and plant selection process in a future presentation;**
- **believes that, overall, the Design Commission approves the Design Development, but feels that certain components of the design need further development:**
 - **encourages further exploration of a softer perimeter, working with the client to create a more porous site, recognizing the security issues that are inherent in SPD's programmatic needs;**
 - **encourages the artist and architect to focus on fine tuning the south elevation and southeast corner feature; and**
 - **believes that the art elements, which represent natural forms and vegetation, should be better integrated with or reflected in the landscape of the site.**

The Southwest Police Precinct has been located through the Delridge Neighborhood Development Association (DNDA) neighborhood plan. One of the primary concerns with the siting of the building concerns the parking lot of the adjacent development, K Mart. This site is within the "south node" of the neighborhood, and there will be a green buffer surrounding the building. The design team has made many changes since the previous, schematic presentation, and has also made some changes through budget analysis observations. Sustainable goals have been clearly addressed through the incorporation of storm water management, daylighting for offices, and a fuel cell. The landscaping for the site has been redeveloped to address the police officers' desires to visually contain the police precinct parking lot. The design includes earth berms and vegetation at the perimeter fence. There will also drought tolerant vegetation throughout the site. The design team is coordinating with the City arborist to develop the vegetation along the public streetscape, and select appropriate street trees.

Many design changes have been made to the building. The openings of the south façade have changed to coordinate with the column spacing. There is no longer zinc metal siding; the materials will now be dark green metal siding, wood plank siding, and gray/ blue metal trim. The walls will be load-bearing CMU. The design team has not enhanced the presence of the building at the corner, and has developed the corner in relation to the interior program, which is a community room. There will be a vertical element

to mark the corner, and the design team has proposed a flagpole. The main entry to the building will be located on Delridge Way.

Art Program

The art program has changed through Seattle Art Commission (SAC) comments and recommendations. The integration of art into the project design has been developed as a metaphor of the watershed through specific interpretations. Water is represented through the textured glass treatment at the lobby windows as an abstract depiction of fingerprint and text patterning. These images will be transferred onto the glass through a plastic or vinyl laminate, or silkscreen baked onto glass. There will be panels, with textures cast into the concrete to represent the streambed texture. There is a freestanding wood sanctuary sculpture seen through the front window. There will also be an exterior abstract dream forest, which will be created through the projection of light. There will be lighter elements scattered throughout the building referring to the underwater environment.

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Feels that the team has compromised responses to previous Design Commission concerns. Feels that the team has missed an opportunity to integrate actual vegetation with the art components of the building. Does not believe that the design team should represent natural vegetation with manufactured materials and surface treatments, when the foliage of the site provides a definite palette.
- Believes that the impermeable perimeter is inconsistent with the “village” concept, which should be developed through opportunities for public integration and pedestrian movement across the site.
- Feels that the vertical element, a flagpole, identifying the southeast corner of the building is insufficient as a community beacon. Feels that there should be a landmark at the corner, signifying the police precinct as a civic building.
- Is concerned that the comments of the police officers, regarding the protection of their personal vehicles, have compromised the site design. Does not believe that these requests should be elevated above than citizens’ needs. Feels that the site design projects an image of a fortress, and is an ironic gesture, suggesting that the police cannot provide effective protection.
- One commissioner recognized the observation that people do target the police and their vehicles, and feels that these crimes could be deterred with a visually open site. Feels that the site should be welcoming to the public.
- Feels that the fingerprint texture of the glass should be changed to provide a more subdued level of contrast, similar to that of the other artistic elements. Also feels that the art panels along the south façade should be glass, rather than concrete; thinks these panels should extend beyond the edge of the wall.
 - Proponents agreed that through further design exploration, the design team would enliven the south façade. Further stated that they would develop and ground a vertical presence at the building corner, by developing the flagpole into a stronger element. Further stated that there does need to be a separation between public and private parking, but the design team will try to balance needs of the officers and the public to create a more permeable perimeter.
- At future reviews, would like the landscape architect to present the design details and decision process with respect to plant selection and the relation to the natural context (the detention pond and creek).

17 August 00 Project: **Civic Center/ Open Space**

Phase: Schematic

Previous Review: 02 December 1999 (Scope Briefing), 16 March 2000 (City Hall/ Schematic Design Concept), 20 April 2000 (Open Space Conceptual Design), 18 May 2000 (Concept Briefing)

Presenters: Peter Bohlin, Bassetti/ Bohlin Cywinski Jackson
 Marilyn Brockman, Bassetti/ Bohlin Cywinski Jackson
 Beliz Brother, Lead Artist
 Kathryn Gustafson, Gustafson Partners Ltd.
 Brad Tong, Shiels Oblatz Johnsen

Attendees: Peter Aylsworth, CityDesign
 Lyle Bicknell, CityDesign
 Geri Beardsley, City Council
 Lee Belland, City Budget Office (CBO)
 Jennifer Guthrie, Gustafson Partners, Ltd.
 Ken Johnsen, Shiels Oblatz Johnsen
 Sue Kelly, CityDesign
 Monica Lake, Executive Services Department
 Tina Lindinger, Bassetti/ Bohlin Cywinski Jackson
 Ethan Melone, Strategic Planning Office (SPO)
 Jennifer Ramirez, City Council
 Marilyn Senour, Seattle Transportation (SEATRAN)
 Barbara Swift, Swift and Company
 Ruri Yampolsky, Seattle Arts Commission (SAC)

Time: 2 hours (SDC Ref. # 221 | DC00119)
 (SDC Ref. # 221 | DC00139)
 (SDC Ref. # 221 | DC00143)

Action: The Commission appreciates the thorough, detailed, and well-orchestrated presentation and makes the following comments and recommendations as the team develops the design.

- The Commission believes that the overall massing of the building is consistent with the Master Plan and that the location and form of the Council Chambers is a positive and strong element of the project;
- believes that the access diagram, with multiple entry points to the building, and the access to Council Chambers, is appropriate;
- agrees that the revision to the Open Space on the Fourth Avenue side of the building, lowering the elevation to street level, is an improvement to the project and improves the access to the building from the west and helps to acknowledge the public who access the building from this direction;
- is concerned that the façade of the main building does not fully express the civic activities taking place within, and still appears too much like a private office building as opposed to the seat of government;
- would like the proponents to intensively explore ways to express the civic nature of this building in total, maybe considering the sunwall as a way to unify the components of the building;
- would encourage the proponents to use the building to express the complexity of the city as a “living organism”, helping to educate the public about the many functions that government provides its citizens, perhaps

through the artwork of the building;

- **believes that there should be a significant mass at the Fourth Avenue edge of the site at the Cherry Street corner, functionally, programmatically, and formally, so the main entrance of Fourth Avenue and Cherry Street expresses the civic nature of the building to the citizens who enter there;**
- **would like the team to consider placing significant civic programs, such as Boards and Commissions rooms at this location, possibly through a second phase of construction;**
- **would like to see more concrete development of how the “cultural café” will provide the active programming and public discourse so critical to making this the civic heart;**
- **would like the proponents to carefully consider the connotation of red as the color for the sunwall; and**
- **looks forward to further development of a more cohesive expression between the parts of the building project, so as to better unify its various elements.**

The design team for the Civic Center/ Open Space presented the schematic design, which has developed in response to previous Design Commission concerns, typically in relation to the public plaza, entry access from Fourth and Fifth Avenue, and public spaces within the building. The Civic Center, as a representation of the integration of the public’s civic life and government, also incorporates the cultural life of Seattle through the plazas of the civic site, which are part of the public realm. The street edge of Fifth Avenue, the “business side”, has a covered arcade along the sidewalk, and at the center of the façade, there is a transparent, fully glazed entry that leads into the “living room of the city.” The view from within this space focuses to west, outside to the historic district and Puget Sound. The ceiling of this space has a solid wood finish with selective glazing to highlight architectural features. The concierge desk, elevator access, informal gathering spaces, and a main room, which can be used as a formal gatherings space, are also within this entry lobby. The entry at Fourth Avenue provides an extensive public space with a ceremonial stair running from James Street and Fourth Avenue to the interior lobby, hillclimb, and elevator core. The second level of the building offers access to the council chambers across a bridge, which could potentially be an art piece. There is a clear link between the offices and the city council chambers. The seventh floor contains the Mayor’s office, whose significance is articulated on the exterior of the building. While the office block is straightforward, the seventh floor interrupts this simplicity with a break in the stone cladding, offering a glass and metal façade, and a gently curving wall. There is a public vestibule beyond the seventh level offices, while many of the offices and conference rooms have access to an exterior patio. The entry and public space at the Fourth Avenue entry is designed as a foundation for cultural discourse. The “cultural cafe,” located at this level, with at-grade access to Fourth Avenue would be operated by a public/ private partnership to provide a space for cultural discourse and civic education.

The main open plaza has been dropped down to Fourth Avenue, which is accessed at grade, or by a staircase to the mid-terrace level. From this level, the “cultural café” is accessed through a “sunwall,” made of colored glass. This wall is completely permeable, as a filtering entry to city hall, and is composed of pivoting glass doors. These doors would remain closed in the winter, and the walkway behind this “sunwall” would be lit, to bring light into the building year-round and throw the shadow of people walking through the space on the “sunwall.” The design team is working with Metro transit to coordinate the location of the entry stairs. There is also a public plaza across Fourth Avenue that provides a transition between active and passive open space. The passive, quiet open plaza is composed of parabolic terraces that direct the visitor away from the activities and traffic. This space could be used

for public performances and gatherings. To strengthen the link between the open spaces on either side of Fourth Avenue, the trees may be removed. There is also a water feature, which runs southwest, between the blocks of the Civic Center, collects near the corner of Fourth Avenue and James Street, overflows and continues to the next open plaza. As this water travels through the lobby of the of Fifth Avenue, could be covered with grilles, or the water might run over textured tiles that represent the regional impact of water. The intent of this open space design is to provide activity through daily, continual activities

Art Program

The art program intends to define the intersection of city government and the cultural life of the city. Art will be integrated into the design of City Hall and art will be represented within the building through the establishment of programs for the future. The “cultural café”, possibly a restaurant, calls on artists and culture to create an activity center that instigates the cultural activities for an eighteen hour day. This space could provide internet access, linking visitors to the activities taking place in the civic offices upstairs. The design team also anticipates that this space could also host design charettes, neighborhood education programs, and a large video screen that could exhibit live broadcast of TV Sea or project a live display of unique neighborhood events taking place throughout the city. There is also space provided for changing exhibitions or an art resource center. There is also art within the building on progressive levels. At the elevator vestibule, there will be space provided for different, discrete pieces that can be changed regularly, including a mega-watt clock or discrete, crafted pieces representing the work of artists that could potentially be paired with architects in future projects. There will also be a “wobble wall,” separating the elevators from the discussion spaces, that could run the length of the offices; digital photos from the archives could be transferred to this wall to create a visual map of the history of the city. Within one of the exterior terraces, there will be a discrete memorial.

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Recognizing the intent to create a foundation for cultural discourse, would like to know if this is the primary concept that focuses the input of the variety of creative sources, the architect, landscape architect, and artist.
 - Proponents stated that the design clarifies the idea that there are multiple levels of discourse (of people, of government and law, and between office workers) within this building. Further stated that the team is grappling with this throughout the design, and that the cultural discourse is activated through the “cultural café,” the flowing water, and the interaction of the building and the hillclimb. Further stated that this energy extends to the government spaces, and within the offices, through further detailing. The landscaping is not a prominent aspect of the office block, but the landscape is revived on the roof level. Further stated that, because this is a Civic Center, some of the activities can be civic, but not necessarily governmental. This diversity is reflected in the different ways the interior and exterior public space is used.
- Analyzing the entirety of the project, feels that certain elements of the project carry the weight of public accessibility and civic image, such as the embellishment of the council chambers, which proclaims its identity as public space. Is concerned that the main building has been designed as a background building. Feels that most of the design development has focused on the interior of the building, but the exterior does not express its civic nature.
 - Proponents stated that the civic aspect of the building is represented by the open spaces with the colonnade. Further stated that, in fact, it is a little office tower, marked at the top by the Mayor’s realm, which is a glazed lid, that is a cousin of the lid at the chamber level. The design team has now stretched the “legs of building” to the ground. Further

stated that they do not want to try to create other symbolic representations. Stated that the project will become richer through the use of natural light, and scaling the exterior glazing, and the open, accessible character.

- Does not agree with this discussion, feels that there is excessive emphasis on the council chambers, rather than the entire project.
 - Proponents stated that the neither council chambers nor the office are intended to unite the project, but the open first floor, the public realm, threads the project together. Feels that the view of across the city from the elevator banks promotes the experience as a civic servant.
- Agrees that although the building does function as an office, the office block does serve a higher function, and the building has not matured to reflect this character. Feels that the curved wall has been diluted through the integration and the design process.
 - Proponents stated that the curved wall cannot be pulled away from the office block, because of the budget that has been allocated for the public spaces of the building. Further stated that the design efforts need to be focused on the components that are most important to people. The curved wall is no longer a gratuitous element, and does not stretch beyond the roof edge; the curved wall now ends at the roof edge of the Mayor's office. Further stated that it is superficial to call the building mass an office block. Previously, the concept involved a glazed block, and was transparent. The stone chosen for the cladding is that which will also be used at the Justice Center. Agreed that the greatest mass should be placed at the north edge of the site to create a dialogue between the two buildings. Further stated that bringing the legs of mass down gives the building more solidity. Stated that the design team is enlarging the glass to stone ratio; the building will not appear as a closed block. The light shelves, extended outside will prevent a "dead window" appearance. Stated that, working through other design resolutions throughout the building, the team has achieved an elegant balance, and expects to focus this attention on the tower. Further stated that for the curved wall, the team is considering fritted glass, to transform the wall into a special, glowing architectural feature. Further stated that the team will focus on the glazing layout of the office building to determine a solution appropriate for office layout, but is not sure what symbolism is appropriate. Further stated that the horizontal regulating lines will link the components of the building.
- Recognizes the intent of the design team to encourage public use of the building. Feels that there are common cynical views of government.. Feels that this building should, through the artwork of the "cultural café" should express the nature of the services provided by the city for the public. Thinks that the "cultural café" should provide opportunities for self-education and a formal representation of the city as a living organism with continuing functions that provides water, electricity, and collects waste, etc. Feels that the current design of the "cultural café" focuses on entertainment.
 - Proponent agreed that the "cultural café" should be educational, and view this space as one in which a variety of cultures will be interacting in a variety of ways.
- Does not feel that the entry of Fifth Avenue has been resolved. Does not believe that the "living room," business center, concierge, and customer service center of the building should be located at the Fifth Avenue entrance. Encourages the design team to reconsider the civic gesture of the Fourth Avenue space as the main space in which the public would interact with the civic government, and does not agree that the "cultural café" is the means by which the public interacts with the government.

- Is not convinced that retail at the corner of Fourth Avenue and Cherry Street will be successful as a civic gesture to the city. Does not believe that an elevator entry from within the “cultural café” is civic. Feels that the master plan was correct to put some building of some scale adjacent to Fourth Avenue, and there needs to be a civic entry into the building at Fourth Avenue.
- Feels that the trellis at the corner of Fourth Avenue and Cherry Street is unsuccessful. Believes that there is a need for mass at the north side of the building with programming to support it; this could possibly be a Boards and Commissions space. Feels that retail is a hopeless gesture and a weak response. Feels that this area of the building should have a strong and meaningful interaction with the “cultural café.”
 - Proponents stated that the intent of the programming design is to provide spaces that are not deserted after 5:00 PM. Further stated that they believe retail space would activate the area after this time.
- Recognizes that many Boards and Commissions do meet after hours, which is an example of citizen involvement in government. Believes that this could be a civic massing element that is needed on Fourth Avenue.
 - Proponents stated the difficulty in logistics of this idea, due to the requirement that the Municipal building must remain in place during construction. Stated the belief that the public will be familiar with the Fifth Avenue entrance and there is not budget for additional programmatic square footage.
 - Proponents stated that the design team has struggled to incorporate building massing at Fourth Avenue through a future addition, and this idea was rejected. Further stated that the building must be functional when it is complete, and there can be no removal of any elected official or any space associated with their function from the design, to be incorporated through a second phase of construction.
- Believes that, through further exploration of the overall design scheme, the design team could steal programmatic space to create the presence on the corner.
 - Proponent stated that there was more square footage in the Master Plan than the budget allows, and the design team has tried to make Fourth Avenue more accessible, and stated that retail might not be the right word.
 - Proponents stated that the function of the trellis is to contain the space and redirect the eye to the plaza, rather than the adjacencies.
- Is concerned about the use of orange and red as a representation of the “sunwall,” feeling that the color has a connotation as a “gash.” Would like the team to think about the value of that wall and its connotations.
 - Proponents stated that the team will review hundreds of sample of glass, the wall needs to be transparent. Further stated that the color is not finalized, but the proponents like the symbol of the sunset and warmth.
- Would like to see an expression of thanks, within the project, to the people who serve in the government.
 - Proponents stated that they are working on the memorial to all civil servants at the terrace, that will express this thanks through surfaces, lights, or a bench, something that has layers of nuance.
- Likes the development of the expression of mayors chambers, but would like to see essential design elements used to develop the dialogue between this space and the council chambers. Is not suggesting decorative details, but an element that strengthens the overall form.

- Proponent stated that the team is worried that would lead to something that appears to be invented.
- Feels that, through design development, the “sunwall” should be further integrated with other tectonic elements of the building.